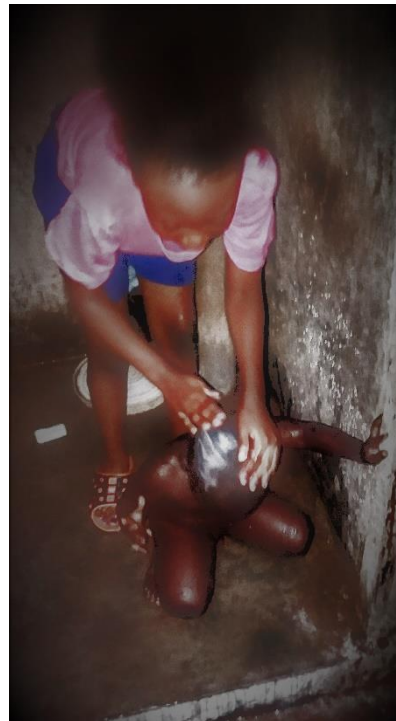


## ***What Kitchen? What Appliances? What Utensils? What?!?***

There was No running Water, Clean Water, Hot Water, electricity, oven, dishwasher, refrigerator, gas stove, toilet, toilet paper, shower, washing machine, dryer, electric appliances, dairy, soda, bread, alcohol and very little meat. We had One knife for EveryThing - and that knife did Not have a Handle. We slept beneath mosquito nets.

Most of the Day, beginning Well before Dawn, was spent preparing and making Meals.



Food was scarce or abundant. Water was scarce and Never abundant and Never Clean. The Water always had to be boiled except for when Used for washing Dishes or Clothes. Dishes and Bathing were done with Cold Water. Heating Water was a luxury. It used more Charcoal and that had to be Conserved for Cooking. Even the Water we brushed our teeth with was boiled. Kids being Kids they would Sometimes come out of the latrine and dip their Hands in the Rain barrels. They Learned quickly. That Water had to be tossed because it could be contaminated with fecal matter. They Learned Fast Not to do that as it Impacted the Family and Community. No One could Afford to pour out a Rain barrel Full of Water.

Well before the Sun was up, the Charcoal stove was lit. That was the First Thing done Every Day. It was a Bad Day when the Charcoal was Wet and Food and Water could Not be Warmed. EveryThing was slow Cooked over a Charcoal stove, usually wrapped in banana leaves, but the Water was always First. Tea would be made. Instead of a Tea bag, though, you would pour a cup of Hot Water and pinch in some Tea leaves. Despite being in a Country that exports some of the Best Coffee in the World, it was too expensive. Instant Nescafe was available. I drank a lot of Hot Water with grated Ginger.

The boiled Water was stored in thermoses to keep Warm. Then Cooking Breakfast could begin. The whole Process took a minimum of two Hours and the Kids left for School at 6:00am. Do the Math. The Children were fed Tea and Leftover Rice or Beans from the Night before. If they were Lucky they got Some Freshly Cooked casava.

If the Parents could Not Afford School, church classes were held for the Children and they would be fed. Typically they got beans and posha (a type of porridge).

Every Day. Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. That's it.



Several Women Clean Up All the Breakfast Dishes (there are No paper plates) and then You Start prepping for Lunch and Dinner. That means beans to be shelled,

casava to be cut, vegetables to be chopped, more Water boiled and heated. Then the floor can be mopped.

If laundry is Not done in the Morning it has to wait until Another Day. All laundry was done by Hand and needed All Day to dry. If You did it later in the Day the Clothes would get moldy. After Lunch the Kids were walked back to School. The Women then Cleaned Up Some More and started to get Dinner ready. After Dinner, EveryThing was Cleaned up: Dishes and Bodies. Everyone then went to Bed. Tomorrow would Begin soon Enough and Everyone would be Up before Dawn.

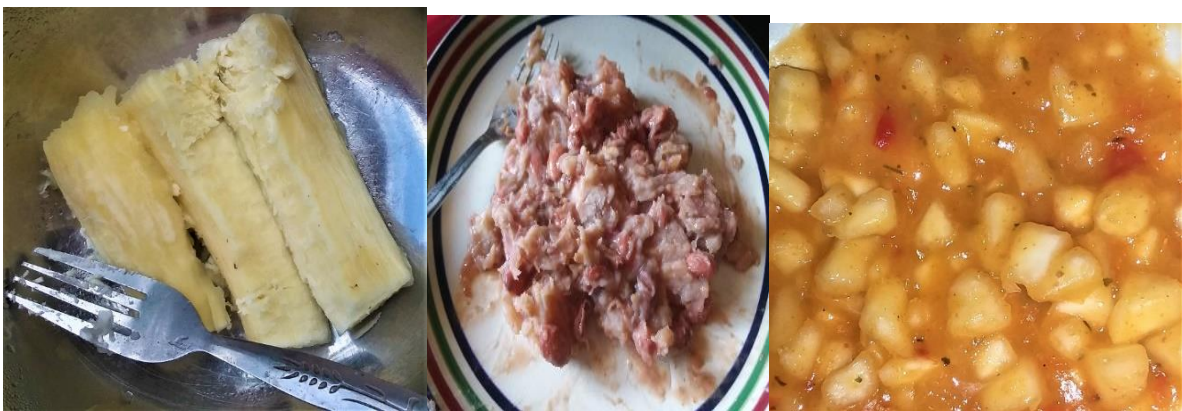


Another Staple was casava. This was also Served slow Cooked Over the Charcoal Fire. It was a treat to have it fried.

Casava Breakfast

Beans & Casava Lunch

Beans & Casava Dinner



Meat was Served once a Week, usually Saturday night, if there was Money; otherwise, after church on Sunday. You got a piece or two. A chicken served Twenty People. The Diet was mainly vegan. For protein, a ginut sauce (similar to a peanut sauce) was served with the sweet potatoes, matoke, casava Staple Food.

The Diet was low in Fat and High in Nutrients and Fiber. We rarely went without Food for long. And when We did, No One Complained. We had other Things To Do. We would have Food soon Enough.



Sarah would always say to Me: "Camilla, God is a God of Miracles, Signs and Wonders." She Believed it and I saw it happen for her Over and Over again. We would be out of Water and the skies would open and All the rainbarrels would be Overflowing.

We would be out of Food and Someone would come from their Farm, unannounced, and leave beans, matoke, avocado (a Treat), casava, or Someone would bring us a live chicken. Good News: Beans! Bad News: Beans for Weeks! But No One Complained (I wanted to). We All got to Work shelling, Grateful to have Food. And, even as We ate Beans for Days On End I Never Heard Anyone say: Again? (I wanted to.) These Children ate the Same Thing Over and Over and Over again Day in and Day out. I Never Heard **One** of the **HUNDREDS** I Met **EVER** Complain or Ask forSomething Else. (I wanted to). The Children Did Not Beg. They wereTaught Not to Very Young. They wereTaught Not to Ask for Seconds and Not to Say if they were Hungry. Chances were, if they were Hungry, so was Everyone Else.



EveryOne Shared. EveryOne had Enough most Days. There were No Seconds. No One Asked. If a Child was still Hungry, an Adult would give them their Meal to finish.